

Appl. No. : 10/049,572
Filed : February 14, 2002

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for participating in the recent telephone interview with Applicants' counsel. In a Final Office Action mailed on December 11, 2003, the Examiner had rejected Claims 5-14, 16-21, and 23-32 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. The Examiner had also objected to Claims 15 and 22 solely on the grounds that these claims depended from rejected base claims. The Examiner indicated that Claims 15 and 22 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims."

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejections, Applicants have canceled all rejected claims to expedite the allowance of this application. Applicants expressly reserve their rights to pursue the canceled claims, and claims of similar scope, in one or more continuation applications. Applicants have also amended Claims 15 and 22, as suggested by the Examiner, to include all of the limitations of the base claims on which they depend. Thus, the objections to Claims 15 and 22 have been overcome and these claims should be allowed. Applicants have also added new Claims 33-99 (dependent upon Claim 15) and new Claims 40-46 (dependent upon Claim 22). These new claims are clearly allowable because they include all of the limitations of the allowable Claims 15 and 22 on which they depend, and they also recite additional limitations. Consequently, all of the pending Claims 15, 22, and 33-46 are patentable and should be permitted to issue.

If the Examiner has any questions which may be answered by telephone, he is invited to call the undersigned directly. Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for any additional extension of time, or credit overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 5/11/04

By: Paul N. Conover
Paul N. Conover
Registration No. 44,087
Attorney of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(949) 760-0404

PNC-4625.DOC
051004